

my view that the proliferative response (transient with brief, intense exposures; prolonged with repeated exposures) is key to the development of disease.

Gee has referred to two of our papers as employing "huge exposures" and finding "only very minimal effects in vascular cells." First, he has ignored the fact that the exposures, while high in fiber number, are very brief (one hour or three hours). As a result, the count of accumulated fibers in the lung does not approach the numbers necessary to compromise normal clearance pathways (9), but the lesions develop nonetheless, as discussed above. Second, the effects Gee refers to are hardly "minimal," and he misrepresents our findings as taking place only in vascular cells. Although he cited the paper, Gee apparently has not thoroughly read the article I co-authored with Overby (2), inasmuch as no mention of the vasculature is made in that paper. In another paper cited by Gee, my co-workers and I showed that one month after the brief exposure, there were twice as many smooth muscle cells, and the vessel walls were doubled in thickness (4). Ultrastructural morphometry (8) also showed over 500% increases in the cellular and matrix volumes of the developing interstitial lesions one month after only one hour of exposure. These data have led me to conclude that "peace and tranquility" do, in fact, not return to the lungs of my "beloved rats," nor to my beloved mice, and probably not to the lungs of people with significant exposures such as custodians and maintenance workers who are repeatedly exposed to fibers released from asbestos-containing materials.

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NAFTA and U.S. Agriculture

Contributing editor Daniel VanderMeer repeats a flawed picture of the position of U.S. agriculture on the North American Trade Agreement ["NAFTA Prompts Health Concerns across the Borders," *EHP* 101(3)].

A few groups of specialty crop producers have expressed either reservations or oppo-

sition to NAFTA. However, the overwhelming majority of U.S. agricultural producers, handlers, processors, and marketers have endorsed the agreement. These groups, organized by "AG for NAFTA," are listed in Table 1. We have joined this group, convinced that NAFTA will promote the growth of both bulk and high-value U.S. farm and food exports, create domestic jobs, and provide Mexico with the opportunities it needs to modernize its economy, its labor market, and its system of environmental protection.

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Table 1. AG for NAFTA members as of 15 July 1993

A.E. Staley Manufacturing Company	Louis Dreyfus Corp.
Affiliated Rice Milling, Inc.	Mid-America Dairymen, Inc.
The Agribusiness Council	Millers' National Federation
The Agricultural Policy Working Group	Monsanto Agricultural Group
Agricultural Processors, Inc.	National American Wholesale Grocers' Association
American Farm Bureau Federation	National Broiler Council
American Feed Industry Association	National Cattlemen's Association
American Oat Association	National Corn Growers Association
American Maize-Products Company	National Grain and Feed Association
American Rice, Inc.	National Grain Sorghum Producers
American Seed Trade Association	National Grain Trade Council
American Meat Institute	National Grange
American Soybean Association	National Oilseed Processors Association
Archer Daniels Midland	National Pork Producers
Beaumont Rice Mills, Inc.	National Sunflower Association
Blue Diamond Growers	North American Export Grain Association
Broussard Rice Mill, Inc.	Northwest Horticultural Council
Bryan Forwarding Company, Inc.	Pekin Energy Company
The Bunge Corporation	Pioneer Hi-bred International
Coastal Rice and Futures, Inc.	Printpack, Inc.
Chicago Board of Trade	Producers Rice Mill, Inc.
Co Bank-National Bank for Cooperatives	Rain and Hail Insurance Service
Collingwood Grain Co.	Ralston Purina Co.
ConAgra, Inc.	The Rice Belt Warehouse, Inc.
Connell Rice and Sugar Co.	The Rice Company
Cormier Rice Milling Co., Inc.	Rice Growers Association of California
Corn Coalition	Rice Millers' Association
Corn Refiners Association	Riceland Foods, Inc.
Creed Rice Company, Inc.	Rice Tec, Inc.
Drexel Chemical Company	Rivana Foods, Inc.
FMC Corporation	Smoot Grain Company
Falcon Rice Mill, Inc.	Sortex-Scancore, Inc.
Farmers Grain Terminal, Inc.	Southern Cotton Oil Co.
Farmers Rice Milling Company, Inc.	Southern States Cooperative
Farmland Industries, Inc.	Sunkist Growers
Great Western Malting Company	Sunwest Milling Company Supreme Rice Mill, Inc.
Grocery Manufacturers of America	Tabor Grain Company
Growmark	Taylor-Cross International
Inchcape Testing Services	United Egg Association
Incotrade, Inc.	United Egg Producers
Land O'Lakes	Washington Apple Commission
Langston Companies, Inc.	Wetzel Seed Company
Liberty Rice Mill, Inc.	